

What is claimed is:

1. A method of connecting a terminal device to a target printer to be used on a network, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving from an external device information regarding printing protocols; and

determining a printing protocol for connecting the terminal device to the target printer based on the information received.

2. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of sending a request for the information regarding printing protocols from the terminal device to the external device on the network before the receiving step,

wherein the information regarding printing protocols is transmitted from the external device to the terminal device.

3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the external device is one of a server and the target printer.

4. The method according to claim 1, wherein the information regarding printing protocols is broadcasted by the external device on the network.

5. The method according to claim 4, wherein the external device is one of printers on the network.
6. The method according to claim 4, wherein the external device is a server on the network.
7. The method according to claim 4, wherein the external device broadcasts the information regarding printing protocols when the external device is switched on.
8. The method according to claim 4, wherein the external device broadcasts the information regarding printing protocols at predetermined time intervals.
9. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of connecting from the terminal device to the target printer in accordance with the printing protocol determined by the determining step.
10. The method according to claim 1,
wherein the determining step includes comparing printing protocols which the terminal device supports with a printing protocol contained in the received information,
wherein the receiving step is repeated until the

printing protocol contained in the received information coincides with one of the printing protocols which the terminal device supports,

wherein the printing protocol which firstly identified to be consistent with the one of the printing protocols which the terminal device supports is used to connect the terminal device to the target printer.

11. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of defining priority levels regarding printing protocols before the determining step,

wherein said determining step includes comparing the printing protocols which the terminal device supports with printing protocols contained in the received information to determine if there are matches, and selecting one printing protocol having a highest priority level from among said matches.

12. The method according to claim 11,

wherein said defining step includes defining said priority levels of printing protocols which the terminal device supports at the terminal device.

13. The method according to claim 11,

wherein said defining step includes defining said

priority levels which the target printer supports at the target printer.

14. The method according to claim 2,

wherein said request is sent according to a Simple Network Management Protocol, and

wherein the information regarding printing protocols includes information managed according to a Management Information Base.

15. The method according to claim 9, further comprising the steps of:

storing the printing protocol for connecting to the target printer determined in the determining step and information for locating the target printer in a memory; and

in advance determining whether the target printer has already been stored in the memory;

wherein if the target printer has been stored in the memory, said connecting step is performed without performing said receiving step and said determining step.

16. The method according to claim 15, wherein the information for locating the target printer includes at least one of an IP address of the target printer and a name

of the target printer.

17. A method of connecting a terminal device to a target printer to be used on a network, the method comprising the steps of:

 sending a request for information regarding printing protocols which a target printer to be used supports from the terminal device to an external device on the network;

 determining a printing protocol for connecting to the target printer based on the information replied by the external device.

18. The method according to claim 17, wherein said external device is a server on the network.

19. The method according to claim 17, wherein said external device is the target printer.

20. A method of connecting a terminal device to a target printer on a network, the method comprising the steps of:

 sending a request for the information regarding printing protocols which a target printer to be used supports from the terminal device to the target printer;

 determining a printing protocol for connecting to the target printer based on the information replied by the

target printer; and

connecting to the target printer in accordance with the determined printing protocol.

21. A method of controlling a connection between a terminal device and a printer on a network, comprising the steps of:

transmitting information regarding printing protocols from an external device on the network to the terminal device; and

connecting from the terminal device to the printer in accordance with the information transmitted from the external device to the terminal device.

22. A terminal device, comprising:

an interface to connect with a network; and

a connection control system that receives information including printing protocols which a target printer to be used supports from an external device on the network, and determines a printing protocol for connecting said terminal device to the target printer based on the received information.

23. A computer program to be executed by a computer to achieve a method of connecting a terminal device to a

target printer to be used on a network, the method comprising the steps of:

- receiving information regarding printing protocols;
- and

- determining a printing protocol for connecting the terminal device to the target printer based on the information received.

24. A printer, comprising:

- an interface to connect with a network; and
- an information output system that broadcasts information regarding printing protocols through the interface.

25. A printer, comprising:

- an interface to connect with a network; and
- an information output system that outputs printing protocols which said printer supports through said interface according to predetermined priority levels concerning the printing protocols.

26. A terminal device, comprising:

- an interface to connect with a network; and
- a connection control system that receives information regarding printing protocols from an external device on the

network, and compares printing protocols which said terminal device supports with a printing protocol contained in the received information,

wherein said connection control system repeats said receiving and said comparing until the printing protocol contained in received information coincides with one of the printing protocols which said terminal device supports,

wherein said connection control system uses a printing protocol which firstly identified to be consistent with one of the printing protocols which said terminal device supports so as to connect said terminal device to a target printer.

27. A terminal device, comprising:

an interface to connect with a network;

a connection control system that sends a request for information regarding printing protocols which a target printer to be used supports to an external device on the network, and determines a printing protocol for connecting to the target printer based on the information replied by the external device.